

THE PLEASANT
TALES
OF THE
Wise Men of *Gotam*.

By A. B. Doctor of Physic.



Whitehaven: Printed by Ann Dunn, Market-place,
where Chapmen may be served with Books & Ballads.

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November 14, 1929

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The Pleasant

TALES

OF THE

WISE MEN of *Gotam*.



THERE were two Men of Gotam, the one of them was going to the Market at Nottingham, in order to buy Sheep; the other was coming from the Market, and they both met together on Nottingham Bridge. Well met, said the one unto the other. Whither be you going? said he that came from Nottingham. Marry, said he that was going thither, I go to the Market to buy Sheep; buy Sheep said other! and which way wilt thou bring them Home? Marry, said the other, I will bring them
over

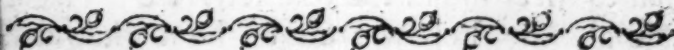
over this Bridge. By *Robin Hood*, said he that came from Nottingham, but thou shalt not. By Maid Marrin, said he that was going thitherward, but I will. Thou shalt not, said one. I will, said the other. Here said the one: Shue there, said the other. Then they beat their Stuffs against the ground and against the other, as if there had been an hundred Sheep running between them. Hold in, said one; Beware the leaping over the Bridge of my Sheep, said the other. I care not, said the other. They shall not come this Way, said the one, but they shall, said the other. Then said the other, and if thou wilt make much to do, I will put my Finger into thy Mouth. A Turd thou wilt, said the other. And as they came in Contention, another Man, of Gotam came from the Market with a Sack of Meal upon his Horse and seeing and hearing his Neighbours at strife for Sheep, and none between them, said, Ah! Fools, will you never learn Wit? Help me, said he that had the Meal, and lay my Sack upon my Shoulder: They did so, and he went to the other Side of the Bridge and unloos'd the Mouth of the Sack, and shook out all the Meal into the River. Now Neighbours, said he how much Meal is there in my Sack now? Marry, there is none at all, said they. Now, by my faith said he,
even

even as much Wit there is in your two heads,
to strive for that which ye have not; Which
was the wisest of these three Persons? judge
you.



The SECOND TALE.

THERE was a Man of Gotham did ride
to the market with two Bushels of
Wheat, and because his Horse should not
bear much Weight; he carried his Corn on
his Neck, for Fear of over burthening him.
Now judge which was wisest, the horse or
himself?



The THIRD TALE.

ON a Time the Men of Gotham would
have pounded a Cuckow, whereby she
should sing all the Year: So in the Midst of
the Town they made an Hedge, round in
Compass, and got a Cuckow, and put there-
in, saying to her, sing here all the Year;
thou wilt lack neither Meat nor Drink. The
Cuckow, as soon she perceived herself en-
compassed within the Hedge, flew away. A
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Vengeance on her, say they, we made not our Hedge high enough.

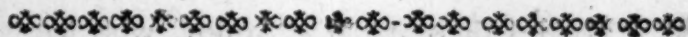


THE FOURTH TALE.

THERE was a Man of Gotham, who went to Nottingham Market to sell Cheeses; and as he was going down the Hill, on Nottingham Bridge, one of the Cheeses fell out of his Waller, and ran down the hill. Ah Whore's Son! said the Fellow, can you run to the market alone? I will lend the one after the other of you. Then he laid down his Waller, took the Cheeses out, and tumbled them down the Hill, one after another; some ran into one Bush, and some into another; and at the last he said, I charge you all to meet me in the Market-place. Accordingly the Fellow came to the market-place to meet his cheeses, and staid there till the market was almost done. Then he went about and enquired of his Neighbours, and other Men, if they saw his Cheeses come to the market? Who should bring them said one of the market-men. Marry themselves, said the Fellow; they knew the way well enough; But a Vengeance on 'em all, I did fear to see my Cheeses run so fast, that they would run beyond the market. I am now almost fully persuaded, that they are gotten to York

Where-

Whereupon he forthwith hired a Horse to ride there after him. but they were not there; and unto this Day no Man could tell him of his Cheques.



THE FIFTH TALE.

THERE was a man of Gotam, who bought at Nottingham a Trivet, or a Brand Iron; and as he was going, home, his Shoulders grew sore with carrying it; upon which he set it down, and, seeing it had three feet, said, Oh Whore's Son! hast thou three feet, and I but two? Thou shalt bear me Home if thou wilt; and so set it down on the Ground and setting himself thereupon, he said to his Trivet, bear me as long as I have borne thee; for if thou dost not, thou shalt stand still for me. The Man of Gotam, when he saw his Trivet would go no further, said, stand still in the Mayor's name, and follow me if thou wilt; I will tell thee the right Way to my Home. When he came Home to his House, his Wife said to him, Where is the Trivet? The Man said, He has three Legs, and I but two, and I did teach him the right Way to my House, let him come Home if he will. Where left you the Trivet, said the Wife? At Gotam Hill said

laid the Man. The Wife did run to fetch Home the Trivet her ownself, or else she had lost it through her Husband's Wit.

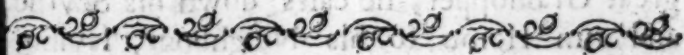
THE SIXTH TALE.

IN Goram there dwelt a Smith, who had a Wasp's Nest in the Straw, at the End of the Forge; there came one of his Neighbours to have his Horse shod, and the Wasps were so busy, that the Fellow was stung with a Wasp: He being angry, said, Art thou worthy to keep a Forge, or no? to have Men here stung with Wasps. O Neighbour, said the Smith, be content, I will put them from their Nest bye and bye; and immediately he took a Coulter, and heat it it glowing hot, and thrust it into the Straw at the End of the Forge, and so set his Forge on Fire, and burnt it up, then said the Smith, I told thee I would fire them out of their Nest.

THE SEVENTH TALE.

WHEN that Good Friday was come, the Men of Goram put their Heads together, what to do with their white Herrings, their red Herring, their Spratt, and Salt Fish. One consulted with the other, and agreed, that such Fish should be cast into their Pond or Pool (the which was in the

the middle of the Town) that they might increase against the next year, and every man that had any Fish left, did cast them into the Pool : One said, I have so many red Herrings, another said, I have so many white Herrings, a third said, I have so many Sprats, and the other said, I have so many Salt Fishes ; let all go together into the Pool or Pond, and we shall live like Lords the next Lent. At the Beginning of the next Lent following, the men drew the pond to have their Fish, and there was nothing but a great Eel : Ah, said they all, a mischief on this Eel, he hath eat up all our Fish : What shall we do with him, said one of them, chop him all to pieces, said one them, chop him all to Pieces, said another, and a third said, let us drown him ; be it so, said they all : So they went to another Pool or Pond had by, and cast this Eel into the water ; lie there said they, and shift for thyself, for no help thou shalt have of us : and there they left the Eel to be drowned.



THE EIGHTH TALE.

ON a Time the Men of Gotam had forgotten to pay their Kent to their Landlord. The one said to the other, To-morrow

is our Pay-day, and what Remedy shall we find to send our Money to our Lord? The one said, This Day I've taken a quick Hare, and he shall carry it, for he is light of Foot. Be it so said they all; he shall have a Letter, and a purse to put our Money in, and we shall direct him the ready way. As soon as the Letters were written, and the Money put in Purse, they tied them about the Hare's Neck, saying, Thou must go first to Loughborough, and then to Leicester, and at Newark, there is our Lord; commend us to him, and there is his Due. The Hare as soon as she was out of their hands, ran a clean contrary Way. Some cried to her, saying, Thou must go to Loughborough first; some said, Let the Hare alone, she can tell a nearer way than the best of us can do; let her go.

The NINTH TALE.

ON a Time there was a man of Gotam mowing in the meadows, and found a great Grasshopper, he casts down his Scythe, and run Home to his Neighbour, saying, There was a Devil in the Field, that hopp'd in the Grass. Then there was every man ready with Clubs and Staves, with Halberts and other weapons, to kill the Grasshopper. When they came unto the Place where the

Gras-

Grasshopper should be, said one to the others; Let every man cross himself from the Devil for we will not meddle with him; and so they returned again, and said, we are bless'd this day that we went no further. Ah! Cowards! said he that had the Scythe in the Mead, help me fetch my Scythe. No said they, it is good to sleep in a whole skin; better loose thy Scythe, than mar us all.



The TENTH TALE.

ON a certain time there were twelve men of Gotam that went a Fishing, and some did wade into the Water, and some stood upon dry Land; and as soon as they had done with Fishing, as they went Homeward, one said to the other, we have ventured wonderful hard this day in wading; I pray G—d that none of us, that did come from Home, be drowned. Marry said the one to the other, let us see that, for there did Twelve of us come out; and they told themselves, and every man told Eleven, and the twelfth man did never tell himself. Alas! said one to the other, there is one of us drowned; So they went back to the Brook, where they had been fishing, and sought up and down for him that was crown'd and made great Lamentations.

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A Courtier came riding by, he ask'd them what it was they did seek, and why they were so sorry? Oh! said they, this Day we went to fish in a Brook, and there did come out twelve of us, and one is drowned. Why said the Courtier, tell how many there is of you; and the one said Eleven, and he did not tell himself. Well said the Courtier, what will you give me and I will find out twelve men? Sir said they, all the money we have. Give me the Money said the Courtier; and he began with the first and gave him a Recumbendibus over his Shoulders, that he groaned, and there is one, said he: So he served all, that they groaned on the Matter; and when he came to the last, he gave him a good one, laying, Here is the twelfth Man. A Blessing on you Heart, said all the company, that you have found out our Neighbour.

THE ELEVENTH TALE.

A Man of Gotam as he was riding upon the Highway found a Cheese; upon which he pulled out his Sword, and bored and prick'd it with the Point thereof, to take up the Cheese: There came another Man by who alighted and took up the Cheese, and rode away with it. The Man of Gotam went
back

back to Nottingham, to buy a long Sword to take up the Cheefe, and when he had bought his Sword, returned back; and when he came to the Place where the Cheefe had laid, he pull'd out his Sword and pricked the Ground saying, a Murrin take it, if I had had this Sword I should have had the Cheefe myself, and now another hath got it.



The TWELFTH TALE.

ANother Man of Gotam did not love his Wife, and having fair Hair, her Husband said divers Times that he would cut it off, and he durst not do it when she was awake, but when she was fast asleep; so one Night he took a Pair of Sheers, and laid them under the Bed-head, which the Wife perceiving, and calling to one of her Maids said, Go to Bed to my Husband, for he is minded to cut off my Hair, and I'll give thee as good a Kirtle as ever thou did wear. The Maid did so, and feign'd herself asleep which the Man perceiving cut off her hair, and wrapped it about his Sheers and laid it under his Bed-head, and fell asleep. The Wife made her Maid to arise, and took the Hair and the Sheers and went into the Hall, and there burnt the Hair; the Man had a Horse which he did love above all Things (as she well

well did know) so the good Wife went into the husband's Sced, In the Morning she arose betimes, and sat by the Fire combing her head. At last the Man came to the Fire and seeing his Wife combing her head, marvelld much thereat. The Maid seeing her Master stand in a brown Study, cried, What the Devil ails the horse in the stable, for he bleeds sore? The Goodman run into the Stable, and found that his horse's Tail was cut off. He went to his Bed-head, and there found the sheers, with his horse's Tail wrapp'd about them; and coming to his Wife he said, I cry the Mercy, for I did think I had cut off your hair last Night, and I have cut off my horse's Tail. Yea, said she, self-do, self-haye: many a man thinketh to do to another Man a shrew'd Turn, and turneth it oftentimes to his own self.

THE THIRTEENTH TALE

A Man of Goram laid a Wager with his Wife, that she could not make him a Cuckold. No, said she, but I can. Spare me not, quoth he, do what thou can'st. So on a Time she hid all the Spiggois and Fauser in the House, and then went to the Buttery and set a Barrel abroach, and cried out to her

Hus-

Husband, saying, I prithee bring me hither a Spiggot and Fauset, or else all the Ale will run out. The Goodman sought up and down and could find none. Come hither, then said she, and hold your Finger in the Tap-hole; so she pull'd out her Finger, and the Goodman put in his. She then call'd a Taylor who lived at the next Door, with whom she had made a Bargain; and in a while after she came to her Husband, and brought a Spiggot and Fauset with her saying, Pull thy Finger out of the Tap-hole, gentle Cuckold for you have lost your Bargain. Beshrew your Heart for your Labour, said the Goodman. Make no such Bargains then, said she, with me.

The FOURTEENTH TALE.

There was a Man of Gotam had taken a young Buzzard, and invited four or five Gentleman's Servants to eat of it. The Wife having kill'd an old brood Goose, and she and two or three Gossips having eat up the Buzzard she said the old Goose to the Fire for the Gentleman's Servants; and when they were come, the old Goose was set before them. What is this said one of them? Then Goodman said, a fine Buzzard. A Buzzard? said they, 'Tis an old Goose, and thou art a knave

to

to mock us: So in great Anger they departed out of his House, and went Home. The the Fellow was very sorry that the Gentlemen's Servants were angry, he then took a Bag, and put into it the Buzzard's Feathers, being resolved to go to them, and let them see the Feathers of the Buzzard, and so to please them. The Wife pray'd her Husband e'er he went, to fetch in a Block of wood for the Fire, and in the mean time she pull'd out the Buzzard's Feathers, and put in the Goose's Feathers. The Man taking the Wallet or Bag, went to the Gentlemen's Servants, and said, I pray you be not angry with me, for you shall see here that I had a Buzzard, for here are the Feathers; so opening the Bag, he shook out all the Goose's Feathers: The Gentlemen's Servants seeing the Goose's Feathers, said, why thou knave, couldst thou not be content to mock us before: So one took a Cudgel in his hand, and gave him a Dozen Stripes, saying, take this for a Reward, and hereafter mock us not any more.

The FIFTEENTH TALE.

ANOTHER Man of Gotam went a wooing to a fair Maid: His Mother warned him before-hand, saying, When thou dost, look upon her, cast a Sheep's Eye, and say how

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divers Times they must say after the Priest
 When all were come to the Church Door,
 the Priest said, be ye all agreed of the Name?
 Be ye, said *Gilbert*, all agreed of the Name?
 Be ye, said *Humphry*, all agreed of the Name?
 Be ye, said *Christabel*, all agreed of the Name?
 The Priest said wherefore be ye come hither?
Gilbert said wherefore be ye come hither?
Humphrey said wherefore be ye come hither?
Christabel said wherefore be ye come hither?
 The Priest being much amazed, could not tell
 what to say, but whistled and said, Whew.
Gilbert whistled, and said Whew. *Humphrey*
 whistled, and said Whew. So did *Christabel*
 also. The Priest being angry, said, Go Home
 Fools, go Home, Fools; go Home. Go
 Home, Fools; go Home, said *Gilbert*. Go
 Home, Fools; go Home, said *Humphrey*. Go
 Home, Fools; go Home; said *Christabel*. The
 Priest then provided for Godfathers and God-
 mothers. Here a man may see that children can
 do nothing without good instructions, and that
 they be not wise that regard Childrens words.

THE SEVENTEENTH TALE.

UPON a certain Time a Man of Gotam
 should have been married; and the day
 was appointed. At length it came when they
 were to be married together. The Priest
 said

said, say after me. The Man said, say after me. The Priest said, Say not after me such Words, but say after me as I shall tell thee. The Fellow said, Say not after me such Words, but say after me as I shall tell thee. The Priest said, Thou dost play the Fool and the knave to mock the Holy Sacrament of Matrimony. The Fellow said, Thou dost play the Fool and the knave to mock the holy Sacrament of Matrimony. The Priest could not tell what to say, but said, What shall I do with this Fool? The Fellow said, what shall I do with this Fool? Farewell, said the Priest, I will not marry thee. Howbeit the Fellow by other men was instructed how to do; and after that he was married. I have heard likewise of such a foolish Prank play'd at *Kingston* of late Days.

THE EIGHTEENTH TALE.

IN *Gotam* there lived a *Scotchman* who had taken a House a little Way from London, and of it he would make an Inn- and for his Sign he would have the Boar's Head, and he went to London to have the Boar's Head made. So coming to the Carver or Joiner, he said, in his Mother Tongue, I say Speak; can'st thou make me a bare Head? Yea, said the Carver. Then said the Scotsman, make me

a bare Head, and anst Yeul, ane thouse have Twenty-pence for thy hire. I will do it, said the Carver, on St. Andrew's day before Christmas, which is named Yeul in Scotland, and in England in the North. The Scotsman at length came to London for his Boar's Head, to set at the Door for a Sign. I say, speak said the Scotsman, hast thou made me a Bare Head? Yes, said the Carver; and fetching him a Man's head that was bare, said, Sir, here is you bare Head. Ay, said the Scotsman, the mikle Devil! is this a Bare Head? Yea said the Carver. I say, said the Scotsman, I will have a Bare head like a Head as do h follow a Sow that hath Grices. Sir, said the Carver, I cannot tell what is a Sow, and what is a Grice. What, Whore Son, knowest thou not a Sow that will grect and groan, and her Grices will run after her and cry, a week, a week. O, said the Carver, it is a Pig. Yea, said the Scotsman, let me have her Father's Head made in Timber, and make me a Bird, and let her on Scalps, and cause her to sing Whip, Whir. The Carver said, I cannot cause her to sing Whip, Whir. How Whore's Son, said the Scotsman, gar her as she would sing Whip Whir, By this you may see that every Man delighteth in his own Sense, or rejoiceth in his Fancy.

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The NINETEENTH TALE.

IN old Times, when these aforesaid Jests were (as Men of the Country reported) that such fantastical Matters were done at Gotam, of which I cannot tell half, the Wives were gathered together in an Alehouse, and the one said to the other, that they were all profitable to their Husbands. Which way good Gossips, said the Alewife. The first said, I shall tell you, good Gossips: I can neither bake, brew, nor can I do any other Work; wherefore do I make every day a Holliday, and go to the Alehouse, because at all times I cannot go to the Church; and in the Alehouse I pray that my Goodman may speed well in his Work, and I think my prayers shoul. I do him more good than my labour if I should work. Then said the second, I am profitable to my Husband in saving Candles in Winter; for I cause my Husband and all my Household Folks to go to Bed by day-light. The third Wife said, I am profitable to my Husband in sparing of Bread, for I will eat but little; the drinking a Gallon or two of good Ale takes away part of my stomach, so that little Meat serves me. The fourth Wife said, I am loath to spend Meat and Drink at home

home in my own dwelling, wherefore I march
to the Wine-tavern at Nottingham, and there
make a little tree with Wine and such other
Things as I find there. The fifth Wife said
a Person always meets with more company in
another Man's House than his own, and most
commonly in an Alehouse is the best cheer
in Town; and for sparing of Meat and Drink
and other Necessaries, I go to the Alehouse.
The sixth Wife said, my Husband hath Wood
and Flax, and Tow, and to spare it I go out
to other Men's houses and do other Men's work.
The seventh Wife said, I spare my Good-
man's Wood and Coals, and do sit talking all
the Day by other Men's Fires. The eighth
said, Beef, and Mutton, and Pork are dear,
wherefore I spare it, and do take up with Pig,
Goose, Chicken, Coney, and Capon, which
are of a lower Price. The ninth said, and I
spare my Husband's Soap and Lye; for
whereas I should wash but once in a week, I
do wash but once in a Quarter of a Year.
Then said the Alewife, and I do keep my
Husband's Ale that I brew from sowering;
for whereas I was wont to drink up all, now
I leave never a Drop.

The TWENTIETH TALE.

ON *Alb W-edn-fday*, the Priest of Goram made a Collation ; to which he invited his Parishoners, and said, Friends, the Time now come, that you must use Prayer and Fasting, and Alms-deeds ; and this Week come ye to Shrift, and I will tell you more of my Mind ; But as for Prayers, I think there are but two Persons in the Parish that can say their Pater-noster. As for Fasting, you fast still ; for you have not a good Meal's Meat in the whole Year : As for Alm's-deeds, what should you do to give any thing that have nothing to take too ? But when that you come to the Shrift, I will tell you more of my mind after Mass. The good man that kept the Alehouse came to the Shrift, and above all things he confessed himself to have been drunk at divers Times in the Year, especially in *Lent*. Oh ! abominable in *Lent*, Why, at that time thou shouldst most refrain from all manner of Drunkenness and Folly, wholly abstaining from Flesh and Drink. Not so, said the Fellow, it is an old Proverb *That Fish must swim*. Yea, said the Priest, I say it must swim in water. I cry you mercy, quoth the Fellow, being much mistaken ; for

I always thought that they should swim
Ale.

So one after another the Men of Göt-
came to the Shrift, and when they were
shriven, the Priest said to them, I cannot
what penance to give you. If I should en-
join you to pray, there is none of you can
say your *Pater-n-ster*, and you are all too
too old to learn, in my own Opinion; and
enjoin you to fast; would be Foolishness, for
you have not wherewithal to get good Meat
Meat in the Year; wherefore I do enjoin you
to labour well all the week, that you may
fare sumptuously at Dinner on the Sundays
and, lest you should regard me not, and dis-
obey my Commands, I will visit and take
part. Another he enjoined to fare well on
Monday, another on Tuesday; and so on
after another, that one or other should have
part of the Meat; and as for Alms-deeds, the
Priest said, you are all Beggars except it be
one or two, therefore bestow your Alms on
yourselves.

F I N I S.

Whitehaven: Printed by ANN DUNN.